

# FINAL

BAC 2004 Minutes  
Meeting Date: 11/16/04

## **Milford Budget Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Minutes Approved 11/23/04 Meeting Date 11/16/04**

### **Attendance:**

#### **BAC Members:**

Therese Muller  
Bill Fitzpatrick  
Didi Carter  
Mike Roske  
Bob Courage  
Don Caisse  
Gil Archambault

### **Topics of Discussion:**

Approval of Minutes  
Water District Study Committee  
Department Reviews  
    Police  
    Planning  
Closing

**Next Meeting:** Next BAC meeting will be at 7:30 on Tuesday 11/23, in the Keyes Meeting Room upstairs at the Wadleigh Memorial Library.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The BAC voted 7-0 (2 absent) to amend and then approve the amended meeting minutes of the 11/9 BAC meeting. Approved minutes will be forwarded to BAC members and Dawn Griska. Dawn will save the minutes in .PDF format and forward them to Alan Woolfson for posting to the town's website.

### **WATER DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE**

Bob Courage attended the Water District Study Committee meeting held on 11/10/04 at the DPW garage on South Street. Also present at the meeting were 4 committee members, Katie Chambers (Town Administrator), Larry Pickett (BOS Representative), Mr. Drescher (Town Attorney), and Mr. Neforas (Assistant DPW Director).

Mr. Drescher presented information regarding the establishment of regional water and sewer districts. The districts would operate under State RSA 38 (for Water) and RSA 149-I (for Sewer). Milford has already adopted these RSAs for the operation of Water and Sewer districts.

Under the current system, the BOS also serves as the commissioners for the Town Water and Sewer Departments. This is not a requirement of the RSAs. The Town could choose to elect separate commissioners for Water, Sewer, or both. Having a separate district would make it difficult to create shared bond issues when water and sewer improvements have a benefit to the entire town, such as can happen for water towers, or the sewage treatment facility. The benefit of a separate commission would be to relieve the BOS of the need to manage the Water and

FINAL

Sewer budgets. A separate commission would provide three (3) additional bosses for the Public Works director.

Creating a separate water and/or sewer district requires a petition to the Town to initiate action. The issue must then be on the ballot, and the water users must establish commissioners and boundaries for the water and sewer districts. There would be a separate checklist for district voters, and the district must obtain all water and sewer related assets from the town.

There appears to be an opinion within the Water District Study Committee that there would be cost savings to operate Water and Sewer departments as standalone entities, but it is not clear how this can be the case. Currently, many expensive bond issues are shared by the town, such as the sewage treatment facility, water distribution system, and sewer collection system improvements. Distributing the cost of these facilities across only water users would increase the payment for water users, while decreasing payments from non-water-users for these shared facilities. In addition, costs would be incurred for payroll, administration, equipment, and building costs that are currently grouped with other departments within the Town government.

There also appears to be some concern about the Town's contract with Pennichuck for water supply. The Town pays a standby fee to Pennichuck to provide that 2 million gallons of water per day is available to Milford on an as-needed basis during peak demand periods or should any of the Town-owned wells have to be taken off-line. Milford can safely pump about 1.3 million gallons per day from the two Curtis gravel pack wells, the Town's only source of supply at the present time. Pennichuck also provides service to some areas within Milford, one being Great Brook. They purchase water from our distribution system at metered rates and sell it to the residences of this subdivision. Pennichuck owns and maintains the water infrastructure in this project.

Increasing the supply in Milford may be possible by creating a new well on the Kaley Park property. This option presents some difficulty due to the proximity of both the cemetery and the sewer interceptor. Milford has also explored a sharing agreement with Wilton, but that option also presents some concern: Milford is hoping to obtain a supply of water from Wilton, while Wilton is hoping to obtain supply from Milford. One of those directions can't work.

There was no stated reason for withdrawing from the Pennichuck agreement.

## **DEPARTMENT REVIEWS**

### **Police**

The BAC met with Police Chief Douglas and Captain Fortin. Chief Douglas indicated that the Police department is being effective within the current budget, but is staffed with fewer officers than desired for Milford's current needs. The existing staff is well qualified, but it has been difficult in recent history to hire and train qualified officers.

Hiring is done through a consortium of local Police Departments who share on advertising and initial testing costs. Towns can hire from those candidates who are successful in initial testing.

Milford has recently started a few officers through this process, but the Chief decided to terminate 3 officers during their training period. There are built-in evaluation steps

# FINAL

BAC 2004 Minutes  
Meeting Date: 11/16/04

during the training process. There are high costs for initial startup and training, but the Chief would rather be short on staff than have unqualified officers in the Department.

The structure of the department is ok, but there is a need for a juvenile officer. In addition, 2006 is expected to bring a need for a full time janitor at the new Police Station. Janitorial services are currently supplied by the DPW on a 20 hr/week basis. This will not be sufficient in the new station, as the mechanical room will require some expertise for maintenance, and the new station will require more support than a part-time worker can provide.

The level of staff is defined by a ratio of approximately 2 officers per 1000 population. This need is affected by the high level of multi-family housing in Milford, and also by the effectiveness of Manchester and Nashua Police in driving drug-related crimes outside of these larger cities. Federal grants available to larger cities pushes crime to smaller outlying towns such as Milford.

The Police Officer work week is currently 4 days on and 3 days off. This is set by the Union during negotiations with the town. The Chief has no power to change the schedule once it is established. Negotiations for the next Police contract are currently underway and scheduling is an issue that will be addressed.

Communication within Town Government has not been a major issue for the Police Department, but is better with the Town Administrator than with the BOS.

One significant issue discussed with the Police Department was the excessive Fire support provided at accident scenes. In many cases that the Police respond to an accident, there is no way for the Officer at the scene to stop 2 Fire Engines and an Ambulance from arriving also. This includes the case where the first responder calls in that the accident is minor and does not require support.

There may be a liability issue if on-call fire personnel get into an accident responding to a scene that did not require support. In the case of an emergency, all individuals are protected, but in the case where no support was required, Police Officers could be called to testify against the Town that there was no emergency. The Fire Department's Training officer already includes some training of Police Officers under the "Special Training" section of the Fire Department budget. The BAC voted 7-0 (2 absent) to support the following statement: *"The BAC recommends that the Fire Department could reduce the potential of liability on civil lawsuits, and reduce cost, by training Police Officers to make proper determinations regarding the need for Fire Apparatus at an accident scene. If the trained Police Officer determines that there is no need for fire response, then no fire equipment should be dispatched."*

There is a high probability that the Police will exceed maintenance budgets on vehicles. The Department would really like to have a third vehicle purchased in 2005, but only 2 were approved by the BOS. Several of the Department's vehicles have over 80,000 miles and maintenance costs on these vehicles is increasing.

The Chief believes that there will be a surplus in the 2004 budget for Training Supplies (12002-561004). This line item specifies costs for such items as ammunition and other supplies for training exercises. For 2004, the Department has not had as many

FINAL

programs as expected, and will likely have \$7K-\$8K remaining at the end of the year. This surplus is likely to be repeated in the 2005 budget. The Police Chief indicated that this money would be better spent for the Police Department on upgrades for the computing server and software for the IMC program used in all of the Department's operations.

In keeping with previous discussions regarding Information Systems support to the Town, the BAC voted 6-1 (2 absent) to support the following statement: *"The BAC recommends transferring \$8,000 from the Police Department's Training Supplies budget (item 12002-561004) into the Information Systems budget for the express purpose of investing in Police Department computing systems, specifically for an upgrade to the IMC system software and server."*

## Planning

The BAC met with Bill Parker (Director) and Lincoln Daley (Planning Technician) of the Planning Department. Of key concern to this discussion was the Planning Department's transition to GIS.

Lincoln Daley has been deeply involved in the transition to GIS. His expertise was noted by the BAC. A question arose as to why such a capable and educated employee was non-exempt (hourly) and not salaried. Therese took the action to investigate this more fully.

Bill and Lincoln are planning a visit to a town in Maine to see a demonstration from a town that uses the same MUNIS modules that Milford currently uses or plans to use, together with a GIS system. The goal of the visit is to see how another town uses the system, see how their structure is set up, get an insider's view of how to use it, and perhaps obtain some useful templates or other customizations.

The current GIS configuration in Milford consists of a copy of ArcView version 3.2 that was found in the Assessor's office. The current version of this software package is 9. Version 3.2 is capable of printing maps. There are some editing features that would be useful for the Planning Department but are unavailable in the current version.

For Data Entry into the system, the BAC asked why the "Research Assistant," a 20-hour position, doesn't enter information into GIS. The current Research Assistant enters information on paper or in Microsoft Word formats. Lincoln indicated that the ArcView software can import data from an Excel file, so some efficiency could be generated by having the Research Assistant fill out Excel templates instead of Microsoft Word.

An upgrade to the GIS was proposed for 2005, but tabled by the BOS a couple of times. \$16,300 was requested for the following:

- \$6,300 for Version 9 of ArcView
- \$7,000 for a dedicated GIS Computing Server
- \$3,000 for "bail outstanding" to Meridian to pay for creation of the most recent tax maps.

The Meridian cost is to pay for work previously contracted and to potentially obtain electronic Computer Aided Design (CAD) files for the most recent mapping of Milford.

# FINAL

BAC 2004 Minutes  
Meeting Date: 11/16/04

The BAC supports the advantages provided by a locally controlled GIS system, and voted 5-2 (2 absent) in favor of the following statement: *"The BAC recommends support of the Planning Department's request for \$16,300 in the 2005 budget to invest in server, software, and mapping data to allow the Town of Milford to produce their own tax maps. This would eliminate the need for an annual payment to Meridian for these maps in the future."*

## CLOSING

The BAC meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Next meeting will be in the Keyes Meeting Room (upstairs in the Library) at 7:30 on Tuesday 11/23/04.

## ACTION ITEMS FROM 11/16 MEETING:

Therese: Determine why the Planning Technician is not a salaried position.

## VOTES AT THE 11/16 MEETING:

*"The BAC recommends that the Fire Department could reduce the potential of liability on civil lawsuits, and reduce cost, by training Police Officers to make proper determinations regarding the need for Fire Apparatus at an accident scene. If the trained Police Officer determines that there is no need for fire response, then no fire equipment should be dispatched."*

BAC voted 7-0, 2 absent

*"The BAC recommends transferring \$8,000 from the Police Department's Training Supplies budget (item 12002-561004) into the Information Systems budget for the express purpose of investing in Police Department computing systems, specifically for an upgrade to the IMC system software and server."*

BAC voted 6-1, 2 absent

*"The BAC recommends support of the Planning Department's request for \$16,300 in the 2005 budget to invest in server, software, and mapping data to allow the Town of Milford to produce their own tax maps. This would eliminate the need for an annual payment to Meridian for these maps in the future."*

BAC voted 5-2, 2 absent

===END=====

FINAL